



How to be the Best

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful



Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you
in good health and imaan.

On behalf of our AMAU Academy team, we would like
to present to you these compiled notes that we have
prepared to make your journey with us a lot easier.

Our notes are compiled by the AMAU Admin team
and have not been comprehensively checked
by a teacher.

If you find any errors or corrections that need
to be made, kindly inform us via our email
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May Allah make our paths toward seeking
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts
with sincerity and gratefulness
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



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جل جلاله
جَلْ جَلَالُهُ

| جل جلاله | Jalla Jalāluhu
Allah the Most Exalted

صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم
صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلٰیہِ وَسَلَّمَ

| صلی الله عليه وسلم | Sallālāhū Alayhi Wa Sallam
Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

Introduction to the Course

Chapter One

Humans possess a natural inclination to pursue the joys and pleasures permitted by Allah ﷺ. This desire is not punishable as long as it remains within the bounds defined by Allah. Regrettably, in today's world, many individuals focus solely on fleeting worldly pleasures, ignoring the everlasting joy found in obedience to Allah's ﷺ commandments.

In the Qur'an, Allah ﷺ encourages us to hasten towards His obedience and actions that are pleasing to Him:

1

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أَعْدَثْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden [i.e., Paradise] as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous.

Surah Ali 'Imran 133

The prophets and messengers are examples for us to follow in hastening towards good deeds.

Allah ﷺ tells us about them:

2

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَرِّعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرِ وَيَدْعُونَا رَغْبًا وَرَهْبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَشِيعِينَ

Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive.

Surah al-Anbya 90

“

”

Allah ﷺ, out of his mercy, sent Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ as a kind and merciful prophet to guide and lead us.

The Quran and the Sunnah teach us that righteousness is based on servitude to Allah ﷺ, obedience, and calling to good while prohibiting evil.

This course discusses actions, habits and deeds that can make an individual the best version of themselves, benefitting not only themselves but also those around them.

Learning the Qur'an and Teaching It

Chapter Two



Abi 'Abdul Rahman as-Sulami رَجُلُ اللَّهِ الْمَرْجُفُ، also known as Abdullah ibn Habeeb, holds a prominent place in the narrative about the significance of Qur'anic knowledge.

He narrated from 'Uthman ibn 'Affan رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said:

1

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعْلَمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ

The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it.

Sahih al-Bukhari 5027

Abu 'Abdul Rahman as-Sulami began imparting Qur'anic knowledge during the Khilaafah of 'Uthman and continued until the era of al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi.

He affirmed, "**The reason why I have been sitting here all this time teaching the Qur'an is because of the statement of the Messenger, 'The best amongst you is the one who learns the Qur'an and teaches it.'**"

This commitment spanned the transitional period from Uthman's Khilaafah to the end of Hajjaj's governorship, totalling forty years.

Reflecting on the significance of this commitment, it becomes evident that the first quality to strive for in becoming the best version of oneself is a profound understanding and dissemination of the Qur'an. Abu 'Abdul Rahman's life exemplifies the transformative power of Qur'anic learning. His dedication for decades underscores the enduring impact of imbibing and sharing the wisdom encapsulated in the Qur'an.

In essence, the lesson from Abu 'Abdul Rahman as-Sulami encourages us to prioritise Qur'anic education as a fundamental step towards self-improvement. The words of the Messenger resonate, emphasising that true excellence lies in acquiring knowledge of the Qur'an and passing it on to others. This timeless wisdom serves as a beacon for those aspiring to be the best version of themselves, urging them to embark on a journey of continuous learning and to educate Muslims with the Qur'an.

Having Good Manners

Chapter Three



The second quality integral to becoming the best version of oneself is the cultivation of good manners.

It has been narrated from 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Aas رضي الله عنهم that he said:

1

لَمْ يَكُنِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاحِشًا وَلَا مُتَفَحِّشًا وَكَانَ يَقُولُ "إِنَّ مِنْ خَيَارِكُمْ أَحْسَنَكُمْ أَخْلَاقًا"

The Prophet ﷺ never used bad language neither a "Fahish nor a Mutafahish. He used to say "The best amongst you are those who have the best manners and character."

Sahih al-Bukhari 3559

Unlike some who may refrain from using vulgar language but still harbour it within, the Prophet ﷺ neither spoke nor pursued such speech.

In describing the righteous, the Prophet ﷺ highlighted the connection between a person's character and their excellence.

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated a hadith in which he said:

2

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "أَلَا أَنْبِئُكُمْ بِخَيْرِكُمْ؟" قَالُوا: نَعَمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ: "خَيَارُكُمْ أَطْوَلُكُمْ أَعْمَارًا، وَأَحْسَنُكُمْ أَعْمَالًا"

The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: "Shall I not inform you of the best of you?" They said: Yes, O Messenger of God. He said: "The best among you are the longest-lived and the best in deeds."

Sahih Ibn Hibban

This profound statement emphasises not just the duration of life but the quality of actions performed during that time. Living a long life filled with righteous deeds is the epitome of excellence.

He encourages believers to work on their speech, actions, and to dedicate themselves to righteous deeds. In essence, the call is to embody good manners in all aspects of life.

According to Ibn al-'Uthaymeen, it is important for us to perfect our manners towards Allah ﷺ in every aspect of our lives. This includes the way we worship Him, the way we speak about Him, and the deeds we do for His sake.

Additionally, we should try to accept universal occurrences, whether they bring joy or sorrow, with grace. This includes dealing with the loss of loved ones and other challenging situations.

“

Allah ﷺ loves the Muhsineen - those who do good deeds with sincerity and excellence.

”

Being the Best to One's Family

Chapter Four



The third quality essential for becoming the best version of oneself is embedded in the Prophet's ﷺ advice: to be the best to your family. This profound advice underscores the significance of treating those under your care with utmost kindness and excellence.

It has been narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنهم that the Prophet ﷺ said:

1

حَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي

The best of you is he who is best to his family, and I am the best among you to my family.

Mishkat al-Masabih 3252, transmitted by at-Tirmidhi

The Prophet's ﷺ words, "The best among you is the best to his family," encompass a broad spectrum, extending to wives, relatives, and children. Scholars have interpreted this directive to emphasise the importance of exhibiting good manners and high moral conduct within the family unit.

Filling the Gaps in Rows During Prayer

Chapter Five



The fourth quality crucial for personal growth and communal harmony revolves around our behaviour in the Masjid. Often, people maintain distance and leave gaps during congregational prayers.

However, the Prophet ﷺ emphasised the importance of filling these spaces.

This teaching is found in the following hadith:

1

عَنْ أَبْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَابَكَبَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ"

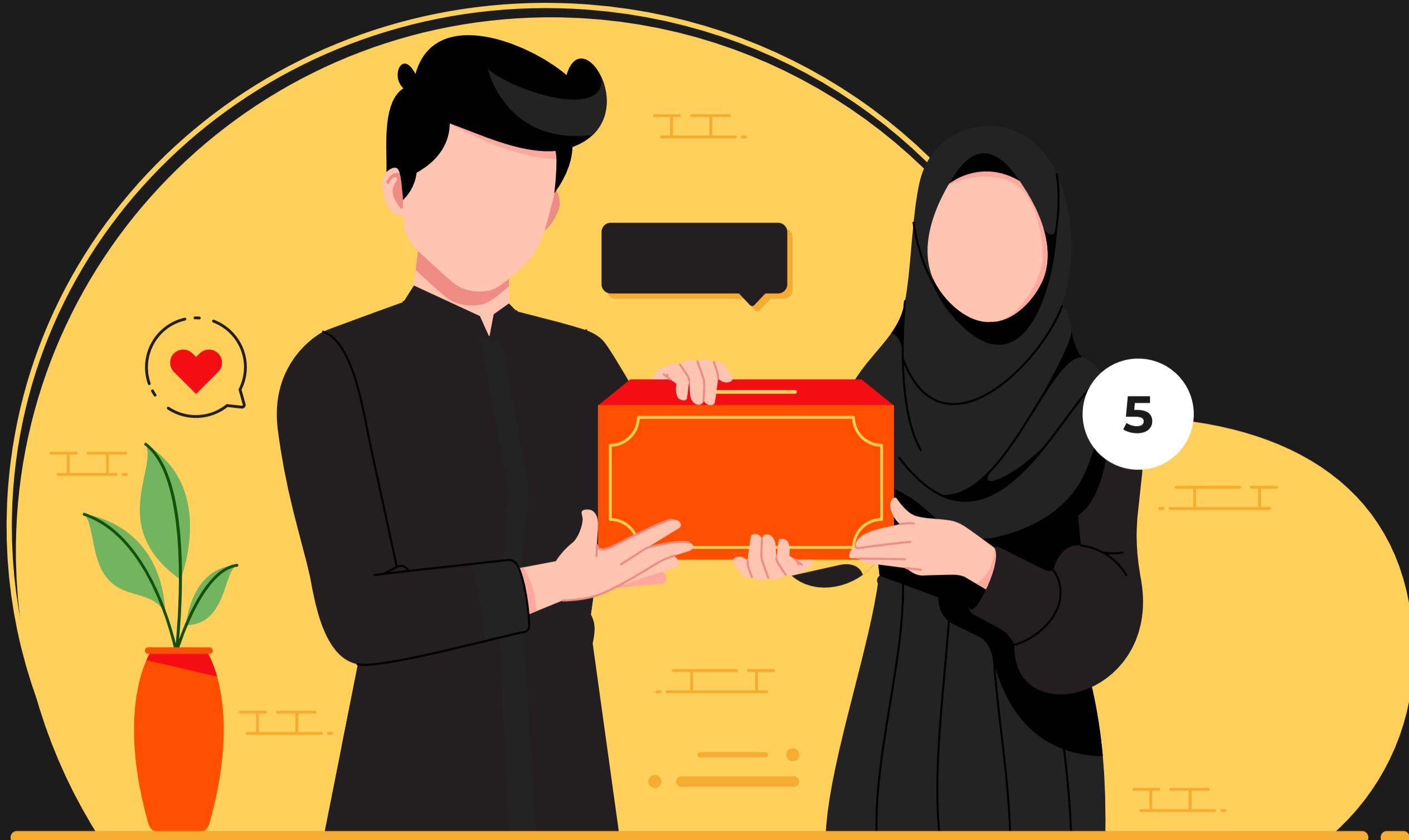
Narrated ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbas: The Prophet ﷺ said: The best of you are those whose shoulders are soft in prayer.

Sunan Abi Dawud 672

The guidance of the Prophet ﷺ encourages believers to stand shoulder to shoulder and close to each other during prayers. This means that if a person comes to join a row, the people should make space for him, get close to each other and fill all gaps between them, ensuring that there are no unfilled spaces left.

Being the Best in Giving Back What You Owe to Others

Chapter Six



The fifth quality essential for personal excellence revolves around financial responsibility, specifically the timely repayment of debts. The Prophet ﷺ emphasised the significance of promptly settling one's financial obligations.

The crux of this principle is captured in the following hadith:

1

أَنَّ رَجُلًا تَقَاضَى رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَغْلَظَ لَهُ، فَهُمْ أَصْحَابُهُ، فَقَالَ " دَعْوَهُ، فَإِنَّ لِصَاحِبِ الْحَقِّ مَقَالًا . وَأَشْتَرُوا لَهُ بَعِيرًا، فَأَعْطُوهُ إِلَّا أَفْضَلَ مِنْ سِنِّهِ . قَالَ " اشْتَرُوهُ فَأَعْطُوهُ إِيَّاهُ، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَكُمْ أَحْسَنُكُمْ قَضَاءً "

A man demanded his debts from Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) in such a rude manner that the companions of the Prophet intended to harm him, but the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Leave him, no doubt, for he (the creditor) has the right to demand it (harshly). Buy a camel and give it to him." They said, "The camel that is available is older than the camel he demands. "The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Buy it and give it to him, for the best among you are those who repay their debts handsomely.

Sahih al-Bukhari 2390

From this hadith we learn that the best among people is the one who, when it comes to giving back a debt, does so quickly and efficiently, ensuring no harm is caused to others.

Feeding Others and Spreading Salaam

Chapter Seven



The sixth quality essential for personal excellence revolves around feeding people, particularly those in need and spreading greetings. The Prophet ﷺ highlighted the virtue of generosity and acknowledging others through the simple act of responding to greetings.

In a hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said:

1

خياركم من أطعم الطعام ورد السلام

“The best of you is the one who gives food and returns peace (the greeting of Salaam).”

Musnad Ahmad

In conclusion, another way to become the best version of ourselves is to develop a habit of feeding people, especially the needy, and returning and spreading the greetings of Salaam.

Having a Profound Understanding of the Deen

Chapter Eight



7

The seventh quality crucial for personal excellence centres around the pursuit of Fiqh or a deep understanding of the Deen.

We find in a hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه:

1

قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، مَنْ أَكْرَمُ النَّاسِ قَالَ "أَتَقَاهُمْ". فَقَالُوا لَيْسَ عَنْ هَذَا نَسْأَلُكَ. قَالَ "فَيُوسُفُ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ ابْنُ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ ابْنِ خَلِيلِ اللَّهِ". قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَنْ هَذَا نَسْأَلُكَ. قَالَ "فَعَنْ مَعَادِنِ الْعَرَبِ تَسْأَلُونَ خِيَارُهُمْ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ خِيَارُهُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ إِذَا فَقَهُوا

The people said, "O Allah's Messenger ﷺ! Who is the most honourable amongst the people (in Allah's Sight)?"

He said, "The most righteous amongst them." They said, "We do not ask you, about this. " He said, "Then Joseph, Allah's Prophet, the son of Allah's Prophet, The son of Allah's Prophet the son of Allah's Khalil (i.e. Abraham)." They said, "We do not want to ask about this."

He said, "Then you want to ask about the descent of the Arabs. Those who were the best in the pre-islamic period of ignorance will be the best in Islam provided they comprehend the religious knowledge."

Sahih al-Bukhari 3353

The essence of this teaching lies in the recognition that the honour, station, and greatness of a Muslim are intricately linked to his or her level of religious comprehension.

Striving and Avoiding Fitān

Chapter Nine



8

Among the qualities that elevate an individual to the best version of themselves is knowing how to navigate trials and tribulations (Fitān).

The Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith:

1

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ رَجُلٌ أَخَذَ بِعِنَانِ فَرَسِيهِ خَلْفَ أَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ، يُخَيْفُهُمْ وَيُخَيْفُونَهُ، أَوْ رَجُلٌ مُعْتَزِّلٌ فِي بَادِيَّةٍ يُؤْدِي حَقَّ اللَّهِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ

The best person in times of turmoil is a man holding the reins of his horse, or he said, by the reins of his horse behind the enemies of Allah, frightening them and them fearing Him, or a man secluded in his desert, fulfilling the rights due to Allah Almighty that he owes.

Mustadrak of Al-Hakim | Graded Sahih by al-Albani

This hadith shows us that Khair (goodness) and well-being lie in staying away from times of Fitān (trials and tribulations). It also highlights that if, at a given time, the conditions for engaging in Jihaad are met, a person should participate in it.



Being Raised by Generous, Believing Parents

Chapter Ten



The ninth quality that propels an individual towards becoming the best version of themselves revolves around being raised by righteous parents.

Read this hadith narrated by Ka'b ibn Malik رضي الله عنه:

1

أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم سُئل أَيُّ النَّاس أَفْضَلُ؟ قَالَ: مُؤْمِنٌ بَيْنَ كَرِيمَيْنِ

The Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Which people are the best?” He said, “A believer between two generous people.”

Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir

This profound guidance emphasises the transformative influence of being born into a family where both parents are believers and known for their generosity.

The believer who finds himself in such a fortunate position not only inherits Imaan from his parents but also has the privilege of imbibing the values of generosity from his mother and father.



Being Someone Whose Goodness is Anticipated

Chapter Eleven



The tenth quality that distinguishes the best of people revolves around ethical conduct and the impact one has on others.

In a hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said:

1

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ يُرْجَى خَيْرٌ وَيُؤْمِنُ شَرِّهُ وَشَرُّكُمْ مَنْ لَا يُرْجَى خَيْرٌ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ شَرِّهُ

The best of you is the one whose goodness is hoped for, and people are safe from his evil. And the worst of you is he whose goodness is not hoped for, and people are not safe from his evil.

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2263

This insightful hadith underscores the virtue of ethical excellence in human interactions.

The best individuals are those whose actions inspire positive expectations, and from whom others feel secure, both physically and emotionally. Conversely, the worst among us, as highlighted in the hadith, is one from whom people do not anticipate good, and they are never safe from potential harm.

In conclusion, the call to be the best among people encourages individuals to be mindful of the ethical impact of their actions. By fostering an environment where goodness is anticipated, and safety is ensured, believers contribute to personal excellence and the well-being of their communities.

Benefitting the People

Chapter Twelve



The eleventh quality that propels an individual towards excellence centres around the concept of benefiting others.

The Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith:

1

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ أَنْفَعُهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ

“The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people.”

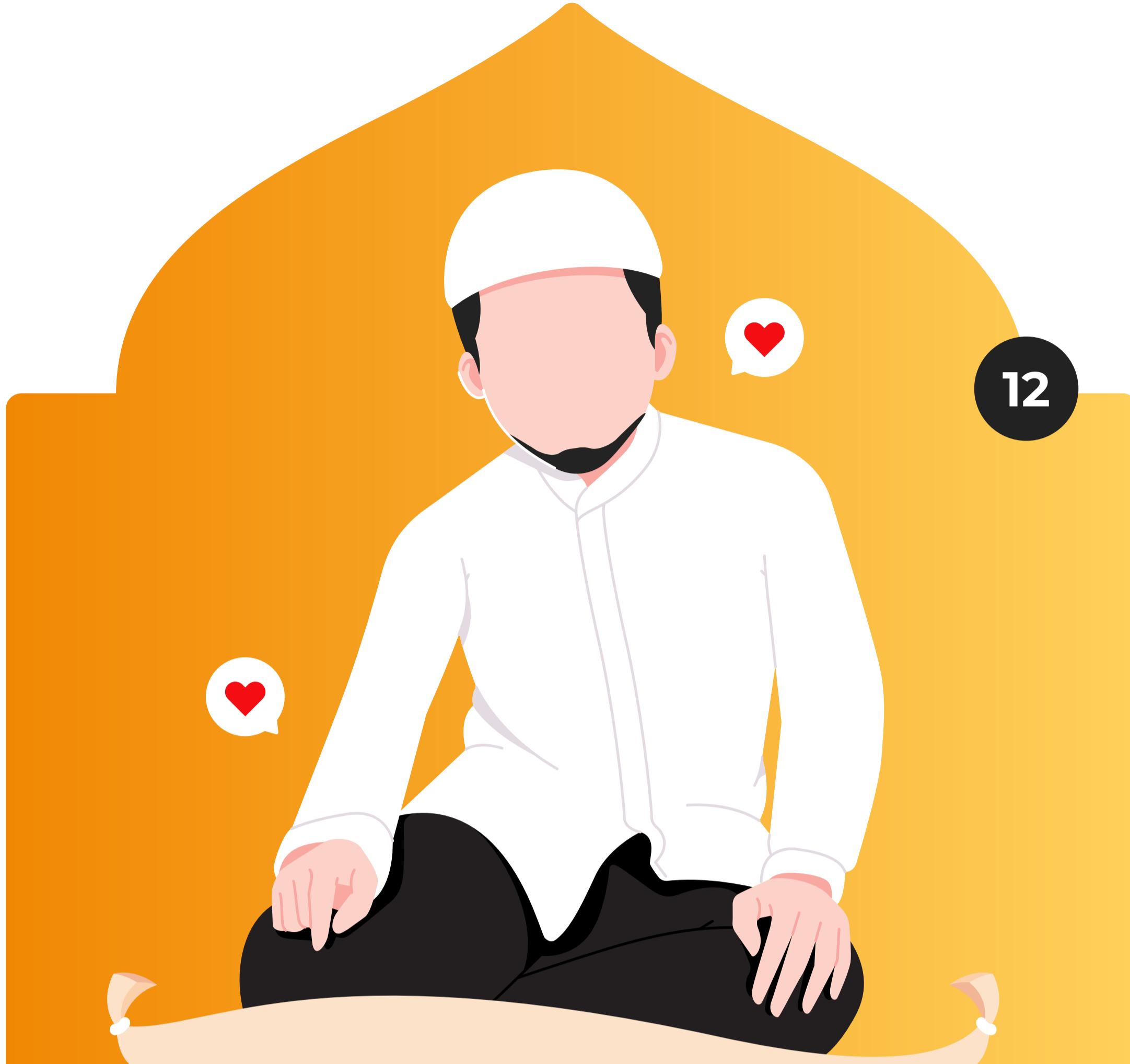
Al-Mu’jam al-Awsat

The hadith provides a comprehensive perspective on how to be beneficial to others. It encompasses contributing from one's resources, whether it be wealth or personal efforts, offering sincere advice and maintaining a positive attitude towards one's companions.

It also includes avoiding argumentation, fighting, and harming fellow Muslims. It calls for a commitment to avoid any form of harm, whether public or private and emphasises the importance of adhering to the teachings of Allah ﷺ in both actions and character.

Possessing a Pure Heart and Honest Speech

Chapter Thirteen



The twelfth quality that contributes to becoming the best version of oneself, as guided by the Prophet ﷺ revolves around the purity of the heart and the virtue of a clean tongue.

In a profound hadith, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنهما reported:

1

فُلْنَا يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ مَنْ خَيْرُ النَّاسِ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذُو الْقَلْبِ الْمَخْمُومِ وَاللَّسَانِ الصَّادِقِ قَالَ قُلْنَا قَدْ عَرَفْنَا اللَّسَانَ الصَّادِقَ فَمَا الْقَلْبُ الْمَخْمُومُ قَالَ التَّقِيُّ النَّبِيُّ الَّذِي لَا إِثْمَ فِيهِ وَلَا بَغْيَ وَلَا حَسَدٌ [...]

We said, “O Messenger of Allah, who are the best of people?” The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “One with a heart swept clean and truthful in speech.” We said, “O Messenger of Allah, we recognise truthful speech, but what is a heart swept clean?” The Prophet said, “One that is Godfearing and pure, in which there is neither sin, nor transgression, nor envy.”

Shu’ab al-Imān 4462

The hadith describes the best individual as one whose heart is untainted by negative qualities such as jealousy, envy, or ulterior motives. A believer who embodies this quality is pure, clean, and pious in their heart, free from any impurities that may hinder personal growth and harmonious relationships.

Additionally, the guidance emphasises the importance of maintaining a benevolent tongue. The words that one utters play a significant role in reflecting the purity of one's heart. A believer with a pure tongue refrains from harmful speech, gossip, and negativity, contributing to a positive and uplifting environment.

Being the Best to One's Companions and Neighbours

Chapter Fourteen



The thirteenth and final quality that defines the best among people, as elucidated by the Prophet ﷺ revolves around one's conduct towards companions and neighbours.

In a hadith narrated by 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضي الله عنهما, the Prophet ﷺ said:

1

خَيْرُ الْأَصْحَابِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَخَيْرُ الْجِيرَانِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِجَارِهِ

The companion who is the best to Allah is the one who is best to his companion. And the neighbour that is the best to Allah is the one that is best to his neighbour.

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 1944

This profound guidance underscores the importance of fostering positive relationships within one's immediate circles. The emphasis on treating companions and neighbours with excellence reflects the holistic nature of personal virtue and its impact on the community.

We should never undermine the significance of each good deed and avoid underestimating any act of kindness or belittling any sin. This perspective encourages believers to approach actions sincerely and diligently, recognising the potential impact of even the seemingly small deeds.

We must avoid negligence and exaggeration in religious practices, and strike a balance in righteous deeds without falling short or going overboard. We should continue to seek Allah's ﷺ aid because true success lies in His Divine support.



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